

U.S. Army Chaplain Center and School

THE C2O CHAPLAIN OFFICER BASIC COURSE

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Techniques of Research

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James D. Hull

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the present C20 course as related to the subject matter, length of training, and relevance to the first active duty assignment for a new chaplain.

Initial contacts with some of the faculty and staff at the U.S. Army Chaplain Center & School quickly indicated that the school was not at all satisfied with the C20 course. For example, although behind schedule the C20 course faces system engineering. Furthermore, a faculty member suggested that the Chaplain Corps doesn't really know what it wants to accomplish with the C20 course. Senior chaplains speak of developing alternative models for the current model of education and training now in effect.¹

These interviews strongly implied the assumption that more weaknesses than strengths would be found as I pursued this research objective.

¹U.S. Army Chaplain Center & School, informal interviews with selected faculty from the Department of Resident Instruction and staff from the Curriculum, Evaluation, and System Engineering offices, September & October, 1973.

STANDARDS USED TO EVALUATE THIS PROJECT

Essentially, I have used four criteria. The first is my own experience as a C20 student. I recall the eight hours of daily lecture and my class notes which followed me for seven years but were seldom used. The weakness of this criteria, however, is also shared by my second criteria, i.e., peer responses to the OPINION SURVEY which I designed "ideally" for mailing to the chaplains who are well into or just completing their first assignments. Since this mailing option was not available for this project, I sought the response of the C22 class even though their student status and "time distance" from their experience in the C20 course constituted recognized weaknesses affecting the validity of the data collected.²

The third criteria has two phases. Students completing Phase I and Phase II of the C20 course are asked to evaluate it. For my purpose their critiques have some validity, but they are invalid from the standpoint that, by-in-large, these men have no first assignment 'experience' factor from which to judge the C20 course. To some extent, this weakness is overcome by the critique analysis reports prepared by the Evaluation office at the school. For the most part, this deficiency is best handled by my fourth criteria which consists of survey comments from the field from chaplains who have been on active duty for three years or less.³

Utilizing all four of these criteria as standards for measurement, I discovered the following strengths and weaknesses of the C20 course.

²James D. Hull, "OPINION SURVEY" (fifty-three of ninety-two C22 students responded in an unpublished survey, New York, November, 1973). Further references will be designated (See Appendix A.).

³U.S. Army Chaplain School, "Post Graduate Survey MOS 5310 - Chaplain Functions" (a summary of comments compiled from the 1972 survey), pp.1-3. (Typewritten). Further references will be designated (See Appendix B.).

SUBJECT MATTER OF THE C20 COURSE:

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

The purpose of the Program of Instruction for the C20 course is: "To prepare newly commissioned chaplains of all components for their first duty assignment and to provide basic training and orientation for Staff Specialists. . ."⁴ Generally speaking, the C20 course provides orientation and basic training needed for adaptation into the military environment. Some of the subject matter, however, is too theoretical. Both new chaplains and those on active duty for several years argue for greater practicality in the subject matter in such areas as: 1) counseling, 2) problem solving, 3) unit level chaplain work. They want more emphasis on "how to do it." (See Appendices A & B.)

The C22 chaplains with previous military experience complained about the repetitious military subject matter. They felt chaplains should know this material, but they did not like repeating it themselves. Evidently, in more recent years the school has exempted C20 students who had graduated from another branch Officer Basic Course from repeating some subjects such as Officer Indoctrination, Map Reading, Command & Staff, etc.⁵ This flexibility, then, constitutes a positive force. It also points to one of the greatest weaknesses I can see, i.e., the need to tailor more of the subject matter so that it more adequately fits the needs of the individual students.

How does one integrate the varied levels of military and professional experience which come together in the C20 class? In some ways, this becomes an impossible task. Like basic training, the C20

⁴U.S. Army Chaplain Center and School, "Program of Instruction for 5-16-C20 Chaplain Officer Basic Course," New York, 1972, p.1.

⁵Bartow Daniel, "Branch Transfers Enrolled in the Gaining Branch OBC" (a command approved letter located in the FY 73 C20 Class Admin. File, New York, July 14, 1972), p.1. (Typewritten)

course is "the great leveler." It helps to place everyone on a more equal footing. Hopefully those with greater knowledge and experience will share with the inexperienced. At this point one must ask: what methods of instruction can best facilitate this sharing process amongst the faculty, staff, and students? Judging from the generally favorable response in my OPINION SURVEY to the Group Process Plan, I would hope that the C20 course is moving away from the eight hours of class lecture "endurance contest" approach.

There are several other crucial variables besides the method of instruction affecting the subject matter. These variables become apparent from a study of the student critiques and their reviews by the Evaluation office. When these variables are properly handled, they become strengths. Wrongly handled, they become weaknesses. They may be enumerated as follows:

1. The instructor's attitude toward the subject matter. (Students comment that dry subjects can be made interesting or vice-versa.)
2. The instructor's attitude toward the students. (Students tend to dislike instructors who 'put them down' because of their ignorance. They want 'humane' instructors.)
3. The atmosphere created in the classroom. (Students seem to prefer a relaxed instructor who teaches in an open, informative, and enjoyable atmosphere.)
4. The instructor's mastery of the subject matter. (Students want subject expertise. They call for the hiring of civilians if this is the only way to obtain this expertise.)
5. The student's attitudes, his motivation, and his adaptability to the learning process. (Essentially, each student and faculty member has a teacher/student role which changes back and forth according to the demands of each situation.)

It is no wonder that frequent student complaints center on the amount of time spent in lecturing on material that might be more appropriately studied in a Field Manual, the lack of practical application,

and the covering of material already learned in seminary.⁶ It is, in some ways, a wonder that students complete the C20 course without severely damaging the fairly high levels of motivation which most of them bring to their impending work on active duty.⁷

⁶John Snyder, "C20(73-1) Phase I and II Critiques" (a report analyzing student critiques of the July '72 C20 course, New York, September, 1972), p.1. (Typewritten.)

⁷John Snyder, "C20(73-2) Phase I Critique" (a report from the Evaluation office to the Director of Instruction analyzing student critiques of the winter '73 C20 course, New York, February, 1973), p.4. (Typewritten.)

LENGTH OF TRAINING OF THE C20 COURSE:

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Judging from the response to my OPINION SURVEY, the nine week length of the C20 course is just about right. (See questions 9&14 in Appendix A). Evidently, the command has the same feeling, for it has the option to extend the course to twelve weeks but it has not chosen to do so.

There are a multitude of scheduling problems, however, when one looks at the length of time devoted to each subject in the course. Considering the varied backgrounds of each student and the needs of the institution to teach certain subjects, it is almost impossible to resolve many of these difficulties. Student opinion, for example, varies considerably as to which courses deserve more or less time in the curriculum. (See Appendix A, questions 7, 11, & 12). Chaplain Charles McMillan did point out that there was some variance between the Program of Instruction and the weekly class training schedule as regards the number of hours which are supposed to be devoted to each subject. Finally, the Commandant decided to eliminate the weekend activities at Ft. Dix following the recommendation of his staff.⁸ These last two instances of flexibility, as I view it, constitute a strength. Courses cannot be abolished altogether. But the length of the course can vary to a certain degree and the timing sequence of the subject in the training schedule can be changed if it is deemed appropriate by the faculty and staff.

Eight hours of theoretical classroom instruction a day? Never. Combine the classroom work with more practical field exercises. (See Appendix B).

⁸ Ira Moss, "After-Action Report, Ft. Dix Training, 21 Aug.-6 Sep '73" (a command approved report from the Chief, Command & Leadership Branch to the Director of the Resident Department, New York, September 24, 1973). (Typewritten.)

THE RELEVANCE OF THE C20 COURSE
TO THE FIRST DUTY ASSIGNMENT

In weighing this aspect of my subject, I found it interesting to note that the degree of relevance varied depending on which of the four criteria I was using as the standard for evaluating my research. For example, as I viewed the subject of relevance from the viewpoint of recent graduates, staff and faculty, and those in the field for three years or less, my inclination was to conclude that the course was not very relevant. In fact, it was sorely in need of improvement.

The OPINION SURVEY filled out by my peers, however, served to temper this rather strong judgement. (See Appendix A, questions 6, 7, 8, 9, 11 & 14). Despite the peer evaluation of most of the courses listed on the survey as being of only average help or value, I concluded from my overall review of these surveys that, basically, the C20 course deserved the nine weeks of training that it has had.

How does one account for this unanticipated OPINION SURVEY result? Is it really valid or does the current C22 student status, their "time distance" from the C20 course, or some other variable adversely affect the survey findings? These two questions are difficult to answer. My preference is to partially swing the balance back toward irrelevance as I weighed once again the response of those chaplains in the field for three years or less. (See Appendix B). My reason: these men offer the most valid perspective in terms of measuring the relevance of the course to the first duty assignment.

Should the C20 course only be relevant to the 'first' assignment? I don't think so, and at this point I am critical of this aspect of the stated purpose of the C20 Program of Instruction. I think the C20 course should help to prepare the chaplain for his first few assignments--whether on active duty or in the reserves--rather than just for his first assignment.

In any event, more practical instruction with respect to the work of the unit chaplain is the crying need as seen by those who speak from active duty experience. Perhaps with the addition of this practical dimension to the C20 course, the overall "grade" of the course would move from the C to the B range. This is not impossible. It is a necessary task.

THIS PROJECT ~~is~~ A LOOK TO THE FUTURE

This type of project may be classified as exploratory rather than problem-solving where one tests a working or a proposed hypothesis. Accordingly, my research focused on a comprehensive attempt to get a handle on the C20 course as regards its subject matter, length, and relevance to the first assignment. If I were to formulate a hypothesis and test it, I would focus on the relationship between the subject matter, the method of instruction, and the teaching/learning process.

In terms of the needs of the institution, perhaps examinations reveal the degree of achievement of the training objectives, but I am not as certain that examinations hold as much validity for the students. Their knowledge must be tried in the crucible of actual field experience. It is simply for this reason that more practical instruction is needed.

* * *

APPENDIX A

NOTE: (92) surveys were distributed. (53) were returned. Not all questions were answered. Please return this survey to Jim Hull, on every form. Group #3, or mail box #296 at USACHCS

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OPINION SURVEY
(The G-20 Chaplain Officer Basic Course)

1. Your denomination: Jewish--1 Catholic--7 Protestant --45
2. Did you take the basic course in 1 or 2 sessions? _____
3. When did you take the course? _____
4. Where was your first active duty assignment? _____
5. What kind of first assignment did you have? (Eg. troop, hospital, etc.) 1-school; 2-Reception Station; 1- Admin; 1-Stockade; 2- Hospital
1-Troops with dependent chapel; 8-Garrison; (37) --with troops
6. LISTED BELOW are some of the subjects taught in the G-20 course. As you reflect on your G-20 experience, please circle the figure which "most closely" describes your evaluation of the subject as regards its relevance to your FIRST ASSIGNMENT on active duty.

SCALE INTERPRETATION

0 --- indicates that the course was of no help or value.
3 -- " " " " " " average help or value.
5 -- " " " " " " great help or value.

SUBJECT MATTER RELEVANCE

TO FIRST ASSIGNMENT

SUBJECT TAUGHT

0	1	2	(3)	4	5	Pastoral Care & Counselling
0	1	(2)	(3)	4	5	Religious Education
0	1	2	(3)	4	5	Human Self Development
0	1	2	(3)	(4)	5	Principles of Command & Staff
0	1	2	(3)	(4)	5	Physical Training
0	1	(2)	(3)	4	5	Military Justice
0	1	2	(3)	4	5	Drill & Ceremonies
0	1	2	(3)	4	5	Officer Indoctrination
0	1	2	(3)	4	5	Map Reading
0	1	2	3	4	5	Human Relations Training (NTL)
0	1	2	(3)	4	5	Field Training at Ft. Dix

* Most of these men attended the course when NTL was not offered.

Please return to Jim Hull, Group #3

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7. Would you delete any of the subjects listed under question #6?

9 yes 29 no 6 don't know. Which course(s)? diverse & minimal response

8. The PURPOSE of the program of instruction for the C-20 course is "To prepare newly commissioned chaplains of all components for their first duty assignment."

Did the C-20 course fulfill this purpose in your experience?

28 yes 18 no. Please explain _____

9. The length of the C-20 course is 9 weeks.

a. Would you change the length? 11 yes 32 no

b. How much longer/shorter (delete one) would you make the course? Minimal response in the 3 week to 6 month range

10. Would you teach the same curriculum to Reserve component Chaplains, those in the Staff Specialist program, and those entering active duty?

25 yes 4 no 13 don't know.

11. Would you require 'more' or 'less' field experience at Ft. Dix?

11 more 7 less. How much more/less? _____

note: 26 felt the Ft. Dix experience should be kept 1 week long.
12 would you 'increase' or 'decrease' the amount of NTL Human relations training? 18 increase 6 decrease 12 don't know.

How much increase/decrease? Minimal response from 3 days NTL to 2 weeks of NTL

13. Would you use the Group Process plan as the overall teaching/learning medium? 28 yes 8 no 14 don't know.

14. How would you change the C-20 course? (Place a check by your choice.)

8 a. Reduce the course to 4 weeks plus a year of OJT where the new Chaplain would rotate through 4 different assignments.

2 b. Reduce the course to 1 week of officer indoctrination followed by 2 months of active duty.

34 c. Neither of the above.

15. Do you have an alternate proposal for changing the C-20 course that you feel should be considered? If so, please explain _____

SEE THE NEXT PAGE.

OPINION SURVEY COMMENTS

The following comments were made with respect to certain questions on the survey form. They do not necessarily represent a majority viewpoint of all those who took the survey.

Question #7.

- a. The curriculum needs to be more practical. Make it fit the need.
- b. Various respondents felt that more emphasis should be placed on the following types of subject matter:

counseling
problem solving & the staff study
battalion level/unit chaplain activities
newer religions, race questions, & drug abuse
use the Group Process Plan for military subjects

Question #8.

- a. The C20 course provided a good introduction to the military.
- b. I learned how to soldier.
- c. I took the course by correspondence, and it was worthless.
- d. I took the course two years before entering active duty while I was a seminary student. This was too far removed to be of much value.
- e. The course was too repetitious for those with previous military or reserve experience.

Question #10. Add post visits to see actual Chaplain operations.

Question #11. While at Ft. Dix, teach the use of a jeep and how to put up a GP small tent.

Question #13. Use the Group Process Plan where possible in the C20 course. Chaplains need to learn how to work as a team. 60% lecture; 40% GPP.

Question #15. (Alternate proposals.)

- a. Assign new chaplains to the Post Chaplain's office for three months.
- b. Add one year of OJT with some hospital work.
- c. Have one week of officer orientation; three-six months of OJT; nine weeks of C20.
- d. Eliminate the C20 correspondence course.
- e. The course should come near to the date of entrance onto active duty.

The following information is a summary of comments from the field from Chaplains who have been on active duty for three years or less. This information was compiled from the "Post Graduate Survey MOS 5310 - Chaplain Functions". It was sent to the field during the period August - September 1972.

The men in the field for three years or less would like to see more emphasis in the C20 course on the following areas of interest:

A. Counseling tools and roles. This includes an emphasis on family counseling; counseling blacks and the single soldiers/troops; correct knowledge concerning Hardship Discharge and Compassionate Reassignment policies in the Army; stockade and hospital counselling. Essentially, this all involves a focus on the young soldier in his environment.

B. Practical demonstrations. This involves how one actually uses the chaplain kit in a field service situation; how one actually does a memorial service or a funeral in a military setting; how one runs a projector (chaplains ideally shouldn't have to do this, but, in fact, the reality of their situations often require this if they want to show a film); how to use the Army filing system; more practice in using the military formats for correspondence; how to maintain property book items; what to do on a fund council; more on how to live in the field; more on obtaining good PIO coverage for chaplain activities.

C. The chaplain and his assistant. How does one select and train an OJT assistant? What are the roles of the assistant? What is the proper relationship between the Chaplain and his assistant?

D. Chaplain role confusion. How can one be an officer and a clergyman at the same time? How can I understand the Commander? Why is appearance so important to him? Should appearance be that important to me? What is the role of the unit chaplain at a BCT or AIT unit?

E. Play down some aspects of military subjects. What new chaplain needs to know intricate military organization? ...military tactics?military operations?

F. The 'school solution' versus the reality of local policy.

SELECTED UNPUBLISHED MATERIALS

Daniel, Bartow D. "Branch Transfers Enrolled in the Gaining Branch OBC" U.S. Army Chaplain Center and School, July 14, 1972. (Typewritten.)

Hull, James D. "OPINION SURVEY," U.S. Army Chaplain Center and School, November, 1975. (Micrographed.)

Moss, Ira G. "After-Action Report, Ft. Dix Training, 21 Aug. - 6 Sep '73," U.S. Army Chaplain Center and School, September 24, 1973. (Typewritten.)

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_____. "C20(73-2) Phase I Critique," U.S. Army Chaplain Center and School, Feb. 13 1973. (Typewritten)

U.S. Army Chaplain Center and School. "Program of Instruction for 5-16-C20 Chaplain Officer Basic Course." Ft. Hamilton, New York, 1972.

U.S. Army Chaplain School. "Post Graduate Survey MOS 5310 - Chaplain Functions," Ft. Hamilton, New York, 1972.